



Etrom The Astral Essence

Player's Manual



Introduction

Etrom is an epic adventure that will take you into a dark future where warring societies are divided not just by walls, but by laws, secrets, religions and the terrifying Void Lands. In a world with fantastic technologies, the people will find their future in ancient civilizations governed by mysterious hidden energies.

Etrom leads you across realms and cities, through democracies and "nazi" dictatorships. It is a journey through space-time portals, amongst the Thrones of the Abyss, and beyond the gates of the City of Light. With a huge number of locations, and settings it plunges you into a world of rituals, fraught with secret-service plots and held together by dark spells.

Etrom is an endless journey with AND against demons, secret divinities, dragons, mechs, hovertanks, multiple races and intelligent entities from across space and time...From a brooding world of megacities you will set out across many dimensions and realities to face the men and gods projected into the absolute infinity.

Forge Your Destiny!
Unleash Your Inner Demon!
Feel The POWERS of the Astral Essence!



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1. System requirements

System Minimum Requirements:

Microsoft® Windows® XP/2000
PC with 1000 MHz equivalent or higher processor
256 MB of system RAM
1.5 GB available hard disk space
32x speed or faster CD-ROM drive
DirectX 9.0C
Graphic Card 64Mb
Sound card compatible with direct sound
Microsoft® Mouse or compatible pointing device

Reccomended:

Microsoft® Windows® XP/2000
PC with 3 GHZ equivalent or higher processor
512 MB of system RAM
1.5 GB available hard disk space
32x speed or faster CD-ROM drive
DirectX 9.0C
Graphic Card 128Mb (**PixelShaders 2.0 & VertexShaders 2.0 compatible**)
Sound card compatible with direct sound
Microsoft® Mouse or compatible pointing device

Note: Please make sure you quit all other applications and any web-application such as mirc, icq, AOL Messenger, MSNmessenger etc... during your games.



2. Setup and Game Start

Etrom- “the Astral Essence” features a setup program that is very easy to use.

The setup must be performed only once, the first time you use the game.

Insert the DVD, Etrom “the Astral Essence” in the DVD-ROM unit. Your PC will automatically detect it and in few seconds the automatic setup will be displayed.

Follow the instructions and the game will be installed in few minutes.

2.2 Start the game at any time

When you want to play Etrom “the Astral Essence” use one of the following methods:

A

Insert the game DVD and click on the button “Play” when the relevant window is displayed.

B

Click twice on the icon **ETROM** . This will appear on your desktop if you have performed the automatic setup, or if you have selected to install a shortcut to Etrom “the Astral Essence” in the setup options.

C

Click on the Start button and select: Etrom-The Astral Essence>ETROM.



3. Main Menu

After the opening FMV (which can be skipped by hitting the "Esc" button), all games will start with the Main Menu display:



1. Select "New Game" to start Etrom's adventure.

2. Select "Time Power" to display saved games.

3. Select "Options" to access the configuration display showing all the technical options.

4. Select "Credits" to display the game credits.

5. Select "Quit Game" to exit the game.



3.1 In-Game Menu

If you hit ESC during the game, the Main Menu guide will come up offering the following options:

- Resume Game
- Options
- Main Menu

3. Select "Resume Game" to resume your game.
4. Select "Options" to access the configuration display showing all the technical options.
5. Select "Main Menu" to exit the game and return to the Main Menu.



4. Game Controls

The main interactive device is the Mouse. Using this, you will move, fight, use objects and perform actions through the simple "Point and Click" and "Drag and Drop" systems.

During the game the keyboard can be used to activate particular objects in the inventory, or to enable some options. On the next page you will find a table showing all the existing game commands and how they work.





4.1 Game controls table

Move / Attack / Action	Mouse / Keyboard
Move	Point and Click wherever you want to go using both mouse buttons.
Movement mode: - Walk - Run - Silent	Select pointing and clicking on the Icon for "in-game" movement, or by pushing the M button on the keyboard.
Note: Thanks to the "Silent" mode you can walk behind your enemies without being seen.	
Normal Attack (Sacred Axe / Energy Weapons)	Left mouse button point and click on an enemy.
Power Attack (Sacred Axe)	Right mouse button point and click on an enemy.
Note: This only works if the Astral Power in use is in Astral Axe mode. Moreover, a variable number of Life Points and Astral Points are necessary.	
Spell Note: This only works if the Astral Axe is used and the active Astral Power is in "Spell Mode". Moreover, a variable number of Astral Points are necessary.	Right mouse button wherever (when the power is enabled and in use).
Astral Power Mode	A button
Quick Selection of the Astral Power	S-D buttons
Double burst (or volley) (Enabled Energy Weapons) Note: This only works with Energy Weapons that are not "Disruptors". A double number of bullets are used, but a double number of attacks are launched.	Right mouse button point and click on an enemy.

Attacks using the Disruptor

Note: The attacks launched with the Disruptor have an "Area" effect.

Weapon change

Note: The Sacred Axe is Etrom's main weapon, and it is always in use. The weapon change only works if there is an energy weapon in the Box of energy weapons in use in the inventory.

Using Power Drugs

Left mouse button pointing and clicking on an enemy or, instead, right mouse button pointing and clicking wherever it looks "possible to walk" (where no prohibition icon appears).

W button or via the Inventory.

Right mouse button point and click on the Drug icon in the "in-game" interface, or on the buttons 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-0

Astral transformation into Inner Demon

Space-bar

Note: A variable number of Life Points and Astral Points is necessary.

Sniper Mode

Right mouse button (not on the enemy)

Note: This only works if a sniper rifle is included in the box of the weapons in use of the inventory and it is aimed "in-game".

Zoom in/out:
+/- on the number keypad or using the mouse wheel.

Note2: This weapon does DOUBLE DAMAGE in "sniper mode".

Enter the Mech

Point and click on the Mech if the interaction icon appears on the selected Mech.

Exit the Mech

V button when the Mech is not moving.

Character Sheet & Inventory

I button, or point and click the relevant icon of the "in-game" interface.



Diary / Missions	L button, or point and click the relevant icon of the "in-game" interface.
Map of the Level (when available).	TAB button, or point and click the relevant icon of the "in-game" interface.
Time Power (Portal to the Temple). Note: Active only after accomplishing the first mission of the game "Finding Johan".	T button, or point and right click on the relevant icon of the "in-game" interface.
Quick Save	F5 button (if the Time Power is active).
Camera shift	Point at the borders (left and right) of the screen, or use the arrows on the keyboard.
Zoom in / Zoom out	+/- on the number keypad, or using the mouse wheel.
Dialogues	Point and click on the characters on which the interaction icon appears. Right click to skip a sentence, F11 to skip all the dialogue.
Menu	"Esc" button on the keyboard or point and click the relevant icon of the "in-game" interface.



- ◆ 4.2 Game Controls: Example of an
- ◆ “In-game” screenshot.
- ◆





4.3 2 Game Controls: Example of an "Inventory" screenshot

The screenshot displays the game's inventory interface, which is divided into several functional areas:

- Character's Abilities:** A table showing various abilities and their values.

Sacred Axe Ability	21	Nature	NORMAL
Sacred Axe Power	1	Damage	1-100
Accuracy	26	Ranged dmg	115-130
Life Energy	1	Life Points	500/500
Astral Energy	1	Astral Points	100/100
Astral Defense	1	Parry Value	2
- Armor Protections Values:** A vertical list of protection values for different armor types, all currently at 0.
- Armor in use:** A central display showing the character's current armor and a value of 15000.
- Astral Powers:** A diagram of a Sri Yantra (a complex geometric figure) with various symbols and a central arrow pointing upwards.
- Inventory:** A grid of slots for items, including a section for "Big Slots for heavy objects" and "Small Slots for normal objects".
- Other UI Elements:** A section for "Level 1", "XP Points 0", and "XP to Next Level 2500".

Labels with arrows pointing to specific elements in the interface include:

- Amulet in use
- Rings in use
- Drop item
- Ammo
- Energy Weapon in use
- Power Drugs Belt
- Big Slots for heavy objects
- Small Slots for normal objects



o

4.3.1 Note for objects: In order to use the objects, or select other sectors of the character's file and /or of the Inventory you must simply point and click the relevant icons. In the case of objects, you will be able to move them, after having selected them, by dragging them from one sector to another. You will only be able to place objects in the green areas that will appear when you select them.

4.3.2 Note for Astral Powers: By pointing and clicking in the area of the Astral Powers it is possible to select which power is currently used and in what mode (Axe/Spell). As in the case of the objects, in order to get a brief summary of an astral power you should point at that power to reveal a label. For further details please go to Chapter 7 of this Player's Manual.



4.4 Game Controls: Example of a Shop screenshot



As you can see from the screenshot above, in the shop you will see your equipment on the right and the Shop's merchandise on the left.

Buying and selling take place very easily by simply dragging and dropping the objects from one sector to another (Shop's counter/Inventory).

Pointing at each object will display its characteristics, including the price. By clicking on an object and dragging it into your equipment you will purchase it¹. Simply do the opposite to sell an object.

¹ Fast Purchase: you can make a fast purchase by simply clicking the right button on the object you want to buy.

To be able to buy anything you will have to have the “unites” (the currency in the world of Etrom) necessary to pay the asking price. In the Shop you will find 3 groups of objects that can be selected through the shop menu bar:

1. Energy weapons, divided into the following categories:

- Guns
- Assault Rifles
- Sniper Rifles
- Heavy machine-guns
- Hyper Rifles
- Disruptors

Note: At the bottom of the Energy Weapons display you will always find the light and heavy magazines.

2. Armor

3. Secret and Illegal Objects including:

- Power Drugs
- Secret Files
- Magic Items



4.5 Game Controls: How to Use the Mech



During your adventures you will come across futuristic Mechs that you can use.

If you click on a Mech and the hand-shaped interaction icon appears then you can use that vehicle. If not then you can't.

When you see a Mech and wish to use it then simply get as close to it as you can and click on it.

Please note that while you are driving a vehicle you won't be able to access the inventory, nor can you use any object and/or power. Once onboard you will take on the power and characteristics of the vehicle you're on. Be careful when using these powerful war vehicles, because if they get destroyed, and you are not able to get out before they blow up then you will die.

Also bear in mind that while you're in a vehicle you cannot go through doors, narrow passages, or magic portals.

Briefly, the Mech commands, once on board, are as follows:

Movement / Attack / Action	Mouse / Keyboard
Getting in the Mech	Point and click on the Mech if the interaction icon appears on the pointed Mech.
Getting out the Mech	V button when the Mech doesn't move
Movement	Point and click on where you want to go with both mouse buttons.
Normal Attack	Left mouse button pointing and clicking on an enemy.
Powerful Attack (Disruptor)	Right mouse button anywhere.
Note: The Damage is by "Area".	
Knuckle-duster	Automatic attack pointing and clicking with the left mouse button on a very close enemy (hand-to-hand distance).



4.6 The Diary

I have written and I will write in this diary everything I know about myself and the world, if anybody finds it, they must know that these are not just the fantasies of a crazy visionary...

(Excerpt from the Diary of Etrom Zediostruin, ex Assaulter Officer H.W.D.)



You will be able to access Etrom's diary by clicking on the diary icon located below the Astral Point and Life Point indicators, (see the following screenshot).





Using the diary is very easy, just point and click on the entry titles and use the back and forward buttons to get in and out. This will allow you to browse through important information.

HUMAN WORLD DEFENCE

PmOs ver. 3.0

files

documents

missions

Missions:

- Finding Johan

Finding Johan

State: **ASSIGNED**

Visions revealed a place and a person to me:

- 1) An underground temple, somewhere in the sewers of sector GW 7
- 2) Johan, a crazy preacher.

I could have never imagined the existence of an underground temple... I'll comb every sewers part of sector GW 7, I won't get out of there until I find the gateway to the temple.

Notes:

- 1) My equipment is inadequate, so it's better to avoid fightings if possible. Usually there are many soldiers near the district' s gateways. I have to check the map of Gw 7...



The diary is split into three sections: Missions/Documents/Files

In the Missions section you will find a list and details of all the accomplished and planned Missions. Always read Etrom's notes carefully, they will help you to see how and where to go to progress through the story.

In the Documents section there are many texts forming an in-depth study into the story of Etrom and his world.

In the Files section there are texts that include the secret files that you can buy from Hangan's Shop (right click on the inventory file icon to add it to the documents). Pay attention to the information included in those files, they can help you in all sorts of ways.

4.7 Maps and the World Map

During your adventures in the Megacities, secret dungeons and wastelands you will often (but not always) have an important help in orientating yourself: electronic maps on your palm computer. You can access the map view with the TAB key on the keyboard, or by clicking on the icon "Map" in the in-game user-interface.

When you activate the Map, there are 3 possible results:

1 – Map Unavailable

(This means that the place you are in is magnetically protected)

2 – Total Map

(This means that the palm computer has a complete map of the place you are in)

3 – Discovering Map

(This means that the palm computer does not have a map of the place you are in, but it can trace one out as you move around exploring the place)

In cases 2 and 3 your current position will be displayed (in case 2, with a bright point; in case 3 with an orienting arrow)

In total maps you can also find red points. Go over these with the cursor, and you will see some useful information about the location you are pointing to.

Use maps along with in-game compass and orientation will be easy.



Graphic examples:

Total Map



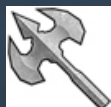
Discovering Map



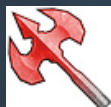
About the **Globe**: This is just a graphical representation file; it is not tied to practical game phases; it is useful in understanding the extension of the world in which you're playing.



4.8 In-Game Icons



Normal Axe (Movement): This is the “basic” icon. It is present when the Astral Axe is currently in use.



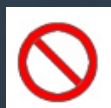
Fighting Axe (Fighting/Attacks): This icon appears when you point the normal axe icon at an enemy and/or a target that you can attack.



Crosshair (Movement): This icon is present when Etrom equips an energy weapon.



Fighting Crosshair (Fightings/Attacks): This icon appears when you point the crosshair icon on an enemy and/or a target that you can shoot.



Prohibition: This Icon appears for few seconds when you click a place you can't walk to.



Interactive Hands (Pick Items/Open Chest/Dialogues/Activate Magic Circle/Take control of a Mech):

When you see this icon you can pick an Item, open a chest, interact with another Character, activate a Magic Circle, and/or take control of a Mech.



Interactive Door (Enter/Exit a door): When you see this icon on a door, a gutter, an astral circle and/or others elements of the environment, you can enter and/or exit that place.



5. Etrom's Abilities

...As you started to understand a few weeks ago, you have become physically stronger since the Astral Essence seized you, and you can conjure the axe you now possess ...

(Johan, the crazy prophet)

The Abilities are Etrom's fundamental fighting values.

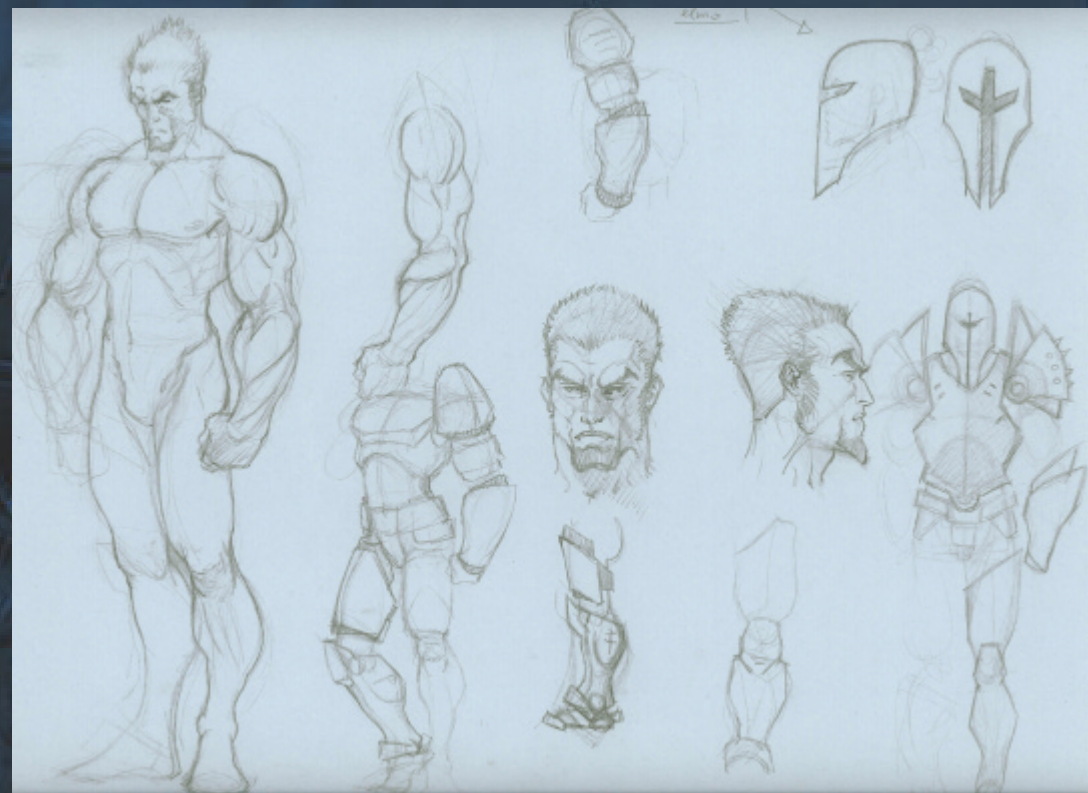
All Abilities are always visible and updated in the character's file.

Life Points and Astral Points are also always visible in the "In-Game" interface.

You start with some basic characteristics that, as long as your experience levels move forward, progress either automatically, or according to your choices.

The Characteristics are the following:

-Sacred Axe Ability:	Attack Value with Axe
-Sacred Axe Power:	Damage Value with Axe
-Accuracy:	Attack Value with Energy Weapons
-Astral Defense:	Defense Value (+Parry)
-Life Energy:	Life Points
-Astral Energy:	Astral Points for Astral Powers





6. Experience Levels

...your aura, bound to the Astral Essence, is immensely bigger than the one borne by the majority of human beings. You can and you will have to enhance it in order to be able to go through the pathway of your destiny, but it won't be easy...

(Excerpt from the first conversation between Etrom and the crazy prophet Johan)

Experience Levels represent the way your abilities and knowledge increase as you progress through the game. You can increase your powers through 30 levels!

Each level is earned through Experience Points, a numeric value that increases when you fight against enemies and, successfully complete missions.



6.1 How to increase Experience Levels



When you step up through experience levels you will see that your “real experience level” is higher than the current one.

As Johan will tell you, in order for you to get to a higher experience level, you will always be requested to go to the Astral Temple of Sighundia and to enter the “Circle of Experience” (for your greater convenience you can use the Power of Time to get to the Temple faster).

Once you are in the magic circle your character stats will appear automatically. For each level that is passed some characteristics will automatically increase.

Apart from that automatic increase you will also receive some “free characteristic Points” (Skill Points), which you can allocate between your character's features as you think best.

You will see that during this stage, some new +/- icons will appear next to the characteristics on your sheet.

Point and click on the “+” icons to allocate the “Free Characteristic Points” (Skill Points). Use the “-” icon to cancel any choice you are not sure about. You will discover that some characteristics can only be increased by a maximum 2 ability points each level, others by only 1. To give the final OK and step up experience levels you will have to allocate all the “Free Characteristic Points”. Try to balance your options and try to increase all the characteristics as you progress through experience levels. All the characteristics are important, although the ones bound to the Sacred Axe are unique to Etrom.



7. The Astral Essence

...The Astral Essence, a mystic artifact with unlimited powers, is the only Truth you possess...

(Excerpt from the first conversation between Etrom and the crazy prophet Johan)

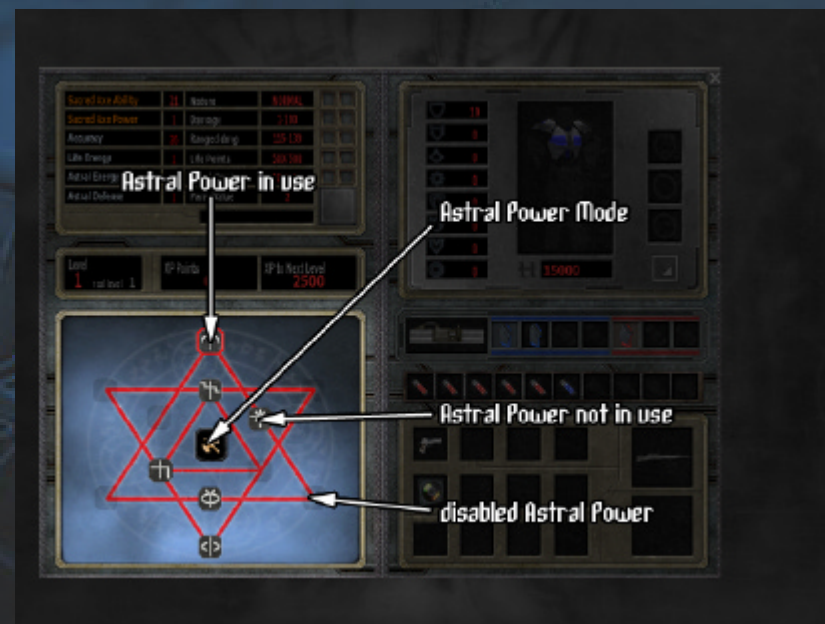
The Astral Essence, thrust into the heart of your character - Etrom, not only gives you an extraordinary strength and psycho-mystic-physical abilities, but also several powers that can be "enabled" by reaching the ancient "Astral Circles of Power". Only you and a few other selected people have the capacity to search for and to seize the powerful energies of those mysterious Circles.

In the beginning you only have two powers enabled: "the Astral Axe" and the "inner Demon". All the powers of the Astral Essence (apart from the Inner Demon which follows its own logic) use the Astral Points and/or the Life Points. They influence the nature of your attack with the axe and are launched using the right mouse button while using the axe.

All the powers of the Astral Essence (apart from the Inner Demon) have two modes: Axe/Spell. These modes can be selected through the "Mode" icon found both in the inventory and in the "in-game" interface. When you select the Axe mode, a power stroke will be launched by clicking the right mouse button on an enemy. When you select the Spell mode, it means that a specific spell will be cast by clicking the right mouse button.

To view each power's specific characteristics, you must visit the character file and point at the power required (if it's enabled). A label will appear showing all the power's main characteristics. When the word "damage" comes up, it refers to the damage intensity of the power in spell mode.

See following example:



All the powers of the Astral essence use Astral Points/Life Points. Once you have got more powers you will have to decide which one should be "in-use" and in what "mode". You can make those selections at any time by accessing the character's file then pointing and clicking the power you will want "in-use". The power will be displayed as being "in-use" thanks to a graphic framework.

See following examples:





8. The Save System and the “Power of Time”

In this first adventure of the Etrom series you can save your games only after you have accomplished the first mission “Finding Johan”. Before that, whether you die, or you quit the game you will have to restart the game from the beginning by selecting “New Game” from the Main Menu. After the first conversation with the mysterious prophet in the Astral Temple of Sighundia, the Astral Essence will release the “Power of Time”. Once it is active you can recall this power by clicking on the icon appearing in the “in-game” interface (see screenshot below). This way, wherever you are, with the exception of some particular magic obstacles, you will be able to open a portal leading you to the Temple. Then, from the Temple you can go back to where you were only if stay inside the Temple, if you get out of it the portal won't work anymore.



8.1 Capturing Time – “Savegame” and “QuickSave”

In order to save your game, you need to have the “TimePower” activated inside your soul. Then you need to go to the “Time Circle” located into the main hall of the Sighundia Temple. You can also save your game with “QuickSave”, pushing the F5 key.

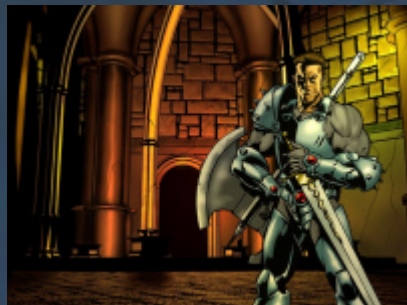
Every time you enter this Circle or push F5, you will be granted access to the Save Game screen, where you can enter a name for the file you want to save and/or overwrite.

Note: All of your saved games will start from the Astral Temple of Sighundia (if there are any “Time Portals” opened to go back where you were before, they will remain activated).

Note2: F5 does not work inside the Temple or in certain places where the power of time is blocked by magical forces.



9. Objects, Weapons, Equipment



The main characteristic of all the objects is that you can only use them if you have reached the required experience level. For example, if you buy, or find an armor needing the 10th experience level to be worn, and you are at the 8th experience level then you won't be able to use it, you can only carry it. This requirement will be highlighted both in the inventory and in the specific information about the object.

There are several objects with different characteristics. For transport and inventory reasons, the size of all the objects is categorized as "normal-sized", or "large-sized".

In general, to use, move, or not use an object you need to click, or drag it. To get information about the object just point at it in the inventory (by pointing at an object "in-game" you will only see its name)

You will find objects while traveling around the world, or you can buy them in Hangan's Shop.

There are the following different types of objects:

- Energy weapons, divided into the following sub-categories:
 - Guns
 - Assault Rifles
 - Sniper Rifles
 - Heavy machine-guns
 - Hyper Rifles
 - Disruptors
- Light Ammo
- Heavy Ammo
- Armor
- Astral Amulets
- Mystic Rings
- Power Drugs
- Secret Files
- Valuables



9.1 Guns



Size in the Inventory: Normal
Types: 31
Magazine used: Light

Guns are precise and powerful weapons, comfortable to carry and easy to use. There are several types of guns, they are generally used by the leaders of fighting groups.

9.2 Assault Rifles



Size in the Inventory: Large
Types: 28
Magazine used: Light

Assault rifles are the main weapon used by the soldiers of the 4 states. Strong and reliable they have good firepower. Compared to smaller guns they have a higher rate of fire, but inferior accuracy.

9.3 Sniper Rifles



Size in the Inventory: Large
Types: 14
Magazine used: Light

Weapons designed for sharpshooters, sniper rifles are precise and deadly weapons if used properly in "sniper mode".

IMPORTANT NOTE:

This weapon does **DOUBLE DAMAGE** in "sniper mode".



9.4 Heavy Machine-Guns



Size in the Inventory: Large
Types: 28
Magazine used: Light

Heavy machine-guns are strong and powerful. They are outstanding in their rate of fire. Despite the speed with which they get through magazines, they are one of the most effective light infantry carried energy weapons.

9.5 Hyper Rifles



Size in the Inventory: Large
Types: 23
Magazine used: Heavy

Hyper rifles are the weapon of choice for the elite infantry of the 4 states. With chromo-Ice bullets these weapons can even pierce the heavy armor used by assault leaders.

9.6 DISRUPTORS



Size in the Inventory: Large
Types: 23
Magazine used: Heavy

DISRUPTORS are portable weapons used by the most powerful infantry units. Their only weaknesses are their high production and maintenance costs, together with the long training period necessary to be able to use them properly.



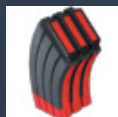
9.7 Light Ammo



Size in the Inventory: Normal
Types: 6

This type of chromo -Ammo with ModifiedBlackChromomo-X1 warheads is used by most existing energy weapons.

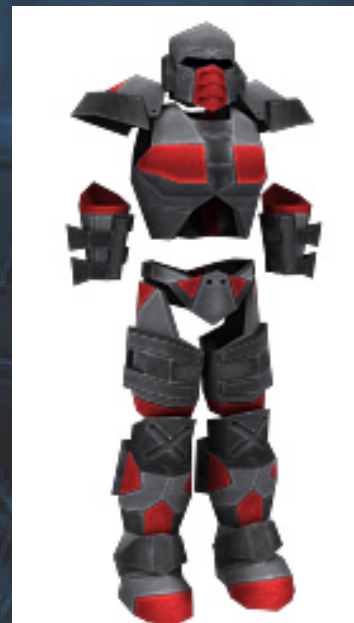
9.8 Heavy Ammo



Size in the Inventory: Normal
Types: 6

This type of chromo -Ammo with ModifiedBlackChromomo-X2 warheads is used for Hyper rifles and DISRUPTORS.

9.9 Armor



Size in the Inventory: Large
Available types: 88

Armor is an **essential** piece of equipment because it protects you from enemies' hits. Every armor has 8 different protection values. Depending upon the nature of the attack launched by an enemy, you will get protection for X amount of damage.

Example:

An enemy launches an attack "Magic Fire" and successfully hits the target. The total damage caused by the attack is 50. In this occasion you are wearing an armor carrying the following protection values:

Protection from attacks "Normal" kind:	35
Protection from attacks "Magic Lightning":	32
Protection from attacks "Ice":	28
Protection from attacks "Blood":	30
Protection from attacks "Poison":	27
Protection from attacks "Magic Fire":	40
Protection from attacks "Abyss":	38
Protection from attacks "Lux":	21

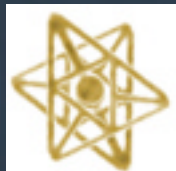


As a consequence you will get a protection of 40. Hence, the final damage calculation will be:

50 (enemy damage) – 40 (armor protection from magic fire) = -10 Life Points.

Note: These rules also apply to your attacks against your enemies...

9.10 Astral Amulets

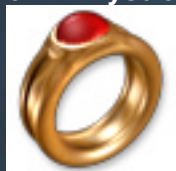


Size in the Inventory: Normal

Available types: 29

Illegal magic objects. Their powers are varied and usually unknown. The few objects of this kind that have been found and analyzed seem to increase the natural characteristics of the individuals wearing them. Not everybody can wear them; their use is bound to the energy emissions of a person's Aura.

9.11 Mystic Rings



Size in the Inventory: Normal

Available types: 83

Illegal magic objects. Their powers are varied and usually unknown. The few objects of this kind that have been found and analyzed seem to increase the natural characteristics of the individuals wearing them. Not everybody can wear them; their use is bound to the energy emissions of a person's Aura.



9.12 Power Drugs



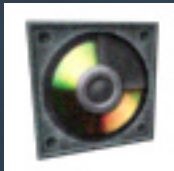
Size in the Inventory: Normal
Available types: 35

Chemical 'enhancers' are officially illegal, but form part of the equipment for the special corps and secret services of the 4 states. Continuous use over the years can lead to death, however, the regenerative and strengthening advantages of this kind of drug during battle is unquestionable.

Note:

In order to be able to use this kind of object it is necessary to wear a Biotechnological Belt. Only the Power Drugs in the Belt can be used. Any others stored in your Inventory are useless until inserted into the belt.

9.13 Secret Files



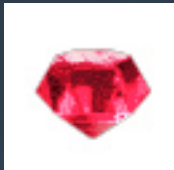
Size in the Inventory: Normal
Available types: ?

Illegal Files carrying secret information.

Note:

In order to be able to read these files after having bought them you have to click them in the Inventory. The file will then be moved to the Diary (see paragraph 2.6), files section. By selecting the correct title you can read them.

9.14 Valuables



Size in the Inventory: Normal
Available types: 73

This kind of object, such as credit cards, rubies, statues, etc., are usually illegal. Although they have no particular practical function they are worth a lot on the black market.



10. The Secret Pathways

The Secret Pathways are a well kept secret. They appeared back in unknown times and in hidden places such as sewers, abandoned passages and deserts.

There are pathways called "Astral Gates" that lead to mysterious temples in the depths of the megacities, or to hidden kingdoms in the "Void Lands".

There are pathways and circles of immense power that project both soul and body thousands of km away...there are many mysteries to unveil.



You will discover much of the magic pathways. Only you and handful of others can walk along them.



11. Background Overview

Earth, 476 A.H.E.F. (After Human Empire Foundation): the Future?

The Future?

The world of Etrom is the planet Earth projected into the future and a dimension parallel to ours. Born from mystic events, this world is dark, wrapped in deserts with the population huddling into enormous Megacities. Protected and trapped by the cities' outer walls, herded into class systems by the walls inside, the people of this Earth look up to a sky occluded by barriers of chromatic energy. Time stands still, history forgotten in the minds of men, and the future lost in the thick, deadly fogs outside the city walls...

Inside the chrome and concrete barriers, humanity lives piled upon itself, 20-30 million souls crammed into 100km. Sector boundaries are marked by huge walls guarded by soldiers who guarantee the power of the privileged and crush the will of the rest. The masses are resigned to a grey, unending existence, where there is no escape, there is only survival. While there are many differences among the 4 states - freedom of thought, expression, material and spiritual wealth - there is little difference in the attitude of the rich and powerful towards the less fortunate.

In all the states, a shortage of resources in the Chroma mines means births are strictly regulated and laws limit reproduction. Each state's target, for every Megacity, is a birth rate of 0, a newborn child for each death. All individuals in excess of this are officially terminated, for those who escape, they become outlawed by their birth, deprived of any rights – they are the 'Unborn'.

In all the states it is forbidden to leave the Megacity where you are born with the only exceptions being the privileged classes, the army and individuals with special passports. In all the states, in each Megacity merely traveling from one city block to another requires you to obtain government passes usually handed only out to the highest class citizens.

In all the states, society is controlled by the secret services and the police who are overseen by the small powerful ruling class. Through spying,

investigation, and technologies both visible and invisible, every individual is monitored. Any suspect action such as going to the library is flagged and the person reported and checked. Every thought considered 'too free' is immediately classed as dangerous and the thinker prosecuted.

Outside the Megacity, within the boundaries of the 4 states, there is only an immense desert devastated by 6 months of torrid heat and 6 months of glacial winter.

These lands are called the 'Dying Deserts' and whoever ventures into them without a Chromatic mask (respirator), is struck down with the 'Dark Disease'.

Beyond the dying deserts and the columns of the main barrier, outside the boundaries of the 4 states lie the mysterious Void Lands where it is absolutely forbidden to venture and where, according to official governmental sources, you can die from the Dark Disease even with a Chromatic mask...



12. How to fight in the world of Etrom

In the world of Etrom, remote controlled energy weapons (replacement to the old gunpowder firearms, although similar to some models from the past) rub shoulders with cold steel weapons such as swords, axes and maces.

This cold steel revival is due to the following factors:

- 1) The development of Military Technologies, like all the other technologies, this is based on the Chroma - an exceptional material but extremely expensive.
- 2) The semi-invisible energy of the Chroma, bound to several elements of the Earth, has made it possible to create powerful armor and incredible shields that can be worn and used very easily by men. This Chroma-made armor is more bullet-proof than cold steel-proof (only if the latter are made out of Chroma). This armor has incredible properties. It can absorb part of the energy generated by an explosion's shockwave meaning they get scratched by bullets as opposed to damaged by a weapon hitting them. Of course a bullet contains less Chroma than a sword,.
- 3) The Contaminated black Chroma used in bullets cannot be recovered while the cold steel weapons made out of Metal Chroma are almost eternal making the long-term economic saving of a cold steel weapon clear.

As mentioned before, energy weapons didn't disappear in favour of the cold steel weapons, on the contrary they were improved and enhanced.

There are different kinds of armor with different Chroma concentrations and as a consequence each has a different level of resistance.

On the battlefield is not uncommon to see square shaped assaulters formations² that move forward against powerful gunners squads, you cannot guess the outcome of those battles.

Usually, the assaulters have heavier weapons than the gunners', but it is almost impossible to find warriors with armor that protects them

completely from energy weapons. The armor costs a lot and to equip an army with advanced chromatic equipment is very, very costly.

As far as you are concerned, always remember that your main weapon is the Sacred Axe, an incredibly powerful weapon, superior to any human artifact. It is forged by the union of your soul and the Astral Essence. That doesn't mean that you have to set energy weapons aside. They will be very useful for you allowing you to hit an enemy at long range, weakening his strength and resistance before he gets to you. Your best defense is to combine strategies quickly in order to be successful!

Always be careful of superhuman enemies, particularly in the Void Lands. Before fighting them try to understand their strengths and their weaknesses!

² Warriors specialized in the hand-to-hand fight



13. The Beginning of my Story

I was a man, a soldier of HWD... 3 weeks ago I was sent on a reconnaissance mission to the Obianc Mountain, in the dying deserts, 250 km south-east of the capital. The command base had detected an energy-Chroma peak in that area. They thought it might be just an insignificant anomaly, worth a routine check but nothing more. Sending one man would be enough. When I reached the area my instrumentation indicated that the energy source was hidden in the bowels of the mountain. I should have warned the base, but I didn't... and with no hesitation I made my way through the darkness...

Before that day, for weeks, I had been haunted by strange dreams, sometimes nightmares. Rationally, I thought they were brought about by my memories of the 2 years spent on the east front, during the never-ending war against Hitland... but I was wrong.

Something, someone was calling me. On entering the mountain's underground passages, I was aware that all communication with the outside world would break down, but I wasn't worried. I didn't think, I didn't feel. Inside, the mountain was a tangle of labyrinthine passages. With my rifle clenched I moved forward, past intersections, closer to Her... after an indefinite amount of time (hours? days? I don't remember...) the torch light started to fade, the batteries almost out... without light the Abyss would have been my only destination... lost in the void I would never have been able to figure out the way back. But that didn't interest me, I felt I was close... I stepped out, started to run, threw my rifle away. I pulled out my respirator and rushed into a narrow and tortuous tunnel, my heart racing... the light went out, but running like crazy in the darkness, I knew where to direct my steps... suddenly I saw a flash. I stopped. I had reached an opening... floating in the air before me I saw the Astral Essence... from that first moment I was aware of her name... She was talking to me, the Astral Essence communicating with my soul... she had to be mine... I walked a few steps, almost in a trance. Lifting my right arm, I opened my hand and grabbed it... an immense and unaccountable power seized me... light, darkness, the whole and the nothingness... I fell down, and my curse began...

The rescue team found me two days later out on the ice at the base of the mountain; I was almost dead. Frostbitten, frozen, the doctors gave me up for dead, yet I stayed in hospital less than a week; the doctors talked of a miracle. For me it was a nightmare. During my stay in the hospital I started to have powerful visions, I became aware that reality was paper thin... I had changed and I had to know how and why... I felt a huge secret had been hidden from humankind... I was seized by an unrestrainable desire for Truth... I had to know the Truth, about myself, the Astral Essence, the world... my past was now meaningless.

Once I had recovered, I reported on my mission, stating that I found nothing and blaming my disappearance on my equipment. After that I left the HWD... but the officers of the Central Institute for Peace did not believe me and as soon as I lost my privileges as an Officer they prosecuted me... now I'm a 'traitor' wanted for 'concealing vital information from the Republic of Sighund'. The army and the police received the order to kill me. I have no home, I'm hunted, a fugitive, but the visions show me the beginning of a new path: a madman, a prophet. I must find him! He's somewhere down in the sewers in the sector GW-7. My journey begins here...



14 Etrom website

Visit the official Etrom website!



www.etrom.net

You can find further details, news, updates on the videogame and future developments on the RPG, the comic, the novel!

Find out about an unlimited universe!